

Purdue University

**Purdue e-Pubs**

---

Charleston Library Conference

---

## How do you spell PDA!? Patron Driven Acquisitions Local to Consortium Print to E Pilots to Programs: There's a Model for Everyone!

Lynn Wiley

*University of Illinois*, [lnwiley@illinois.edu](mailto:lnwiley@illinois.edu)

Tina E. Chrzastowski

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, [shrzh@illinois.edu](mailto:shrzh@illinois.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/charleston>

An indexed, print copy of the Proceedings is also available for purchase at:

<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/charleston>.

You may also be interested in the new series, Charleston Insights in Library, Archival, and Information Sciences. Find out more at: <http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/charleston-insights-library-archival-and-information-sciences>.

---

Lynn Wiley and Tina E. Chrzastowski, "How do you spell PDA!? Patron Driven Acquisitions Local to Consortium Print to E Pilots to Programs: There's a Model for Everyone!" (2010). *Proceedings of the Charleston Library Conference*.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5703/1288284314854>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

## HOW DO YOU SPELL PDA!? PATRON DRIVEN ACQUISITIONS LOCAL TO CONSORTIUM PRINT TO E PILOTS TO PROGRAMS: THERE'S A MODEL FOR EVERYONE!

**Lynn Wiley** ([lnwiley@illinois.edu](mailto:lnwiley@illinois.edu)) Associate Professor, Acquisitions Librarian, University of Illinois

**Tina E. Chrzastowski** ([chrz@illinois.edu](mailto:chrz@illinois.edu)) Chemistry Librarian, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

### ABSTRACT

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Library recently participated in two new “Just-in-Time” acquisitions programs, both of which employed Patron Driven Acquisitions (PDA). The first study was jointly run with the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) and built on the success of CARLI’s robust resource sharing program. The purpose of this study was to begin to bridge the gap on title availability due to lack of purchase or the in-use status of high-demand materials. UIUC and CARLI worked with YBP to load 16,000 records into the CARLI I-Share union catalog, making these titles available to all the CARLI members’ libraries for easy requesting. This study focused on print books and resulted in the on-demand purchase of 190 books in five weeks; books were rush ordered and delivered to requestors (on average) within three business days. The second study was a local (UIUC) ebook pilot program that provided access to 6,000 ebooks and coincided with the launch of a mobile device web site to facilitate access to full text. Users accessed 677 titles (11% of available titles), prompting the purchase of 238 ebooks in approximately four months. In a time of great budget constraints and yet great expectations for access, libraries can experiment in multiple ways to continue to provide great service.

### INTRODUCTION

A number of factors (tight budgets, PDA technology availability) have contributed to the current trend in libraries to experiment with Patron Driven Acquisitions. Libraries want to offer users the ability to help define the collection by making selection decisions. The primary questions posed by both PDA studies are:

- How can we make it easy for patrons to gain access to books that we currently don’t own, but are within our scope to buy?
- Will users want to select their own materials? Will librarians want users to select their own materials?
- What subject areas do users select from?
- What costs are involved? What investment is needed?
- If the pilots work well, when and how do we move past the pilot stage?

## Study 1

A pilot study to determine the feasibility of patron driven, print book acquisitions within a consortia was initiated by UIUC and CARLI on February 1, 2010. Both CARLI and UIUC allocated \$5,000 to fund the pilot (for a total of \$10,000); vendor YBP loaded 16,000 records into the consortial I-Share catalog that matched the parameters set by the study. The parameters included:

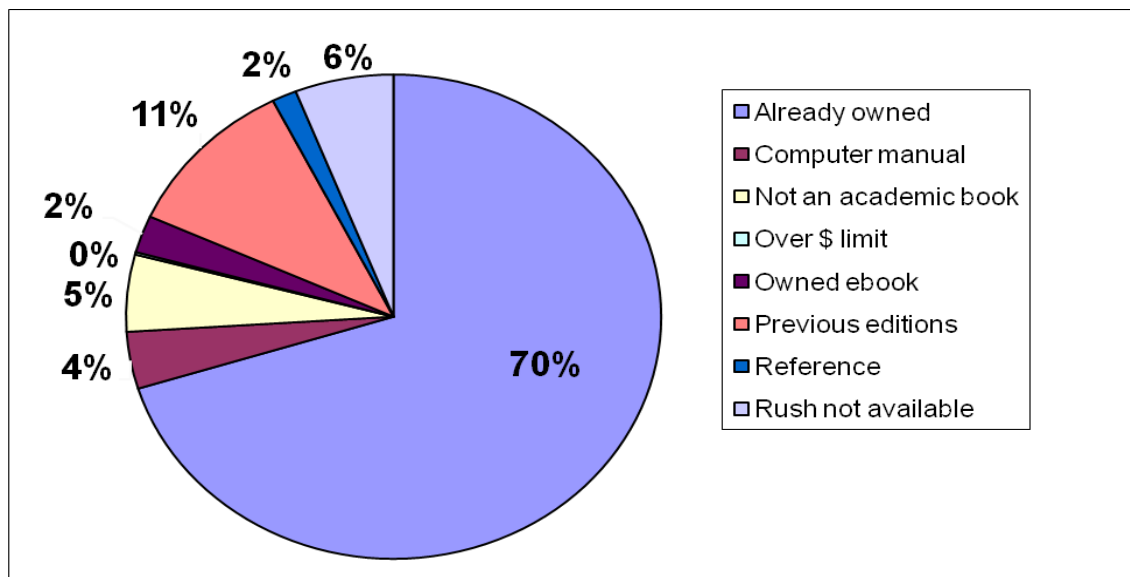
- English language academic books and non-reference titles;
- U.S. Imprints;
- Currently in stock at our vendor, YBP, and available for rush delivery;
- No computer manuals or previous editions of books already owned;
- Priced under \$300.00 each;
- No duplicates or second copies;
- 12 months of publishing output but with the latest date a full three months before the project began (to allow for local book processing of purchased materials).

The UIUC acquisitions department volunteered to handle processing for the entire study with circulation and user affiliation data supplied by CARLI staff members. Because of the investment made by UIUC, and our commitment to rush order, catalog, circulate, and measure use, books in the pilot, once purchased, were housed at UIUC and made available for delivery throughout the I-Share consortia. The option to label these books as jointly owned might also be utilized in any future or long term program.

The pilot ran from February 1, 2010 until all funds were expended, which occurred on March 5, 2010. In five weeks, users placed 795 requests for books. Not all requests resulted in purchases. In fact, of the 795 requests, only 190 resulted in a purchase. There were numerous reasons why requests were not filled, and they are outlined in Figure 1. The most prominent reason (70% of requests) was that the book was already held by a CARLI library and not available for circulation.

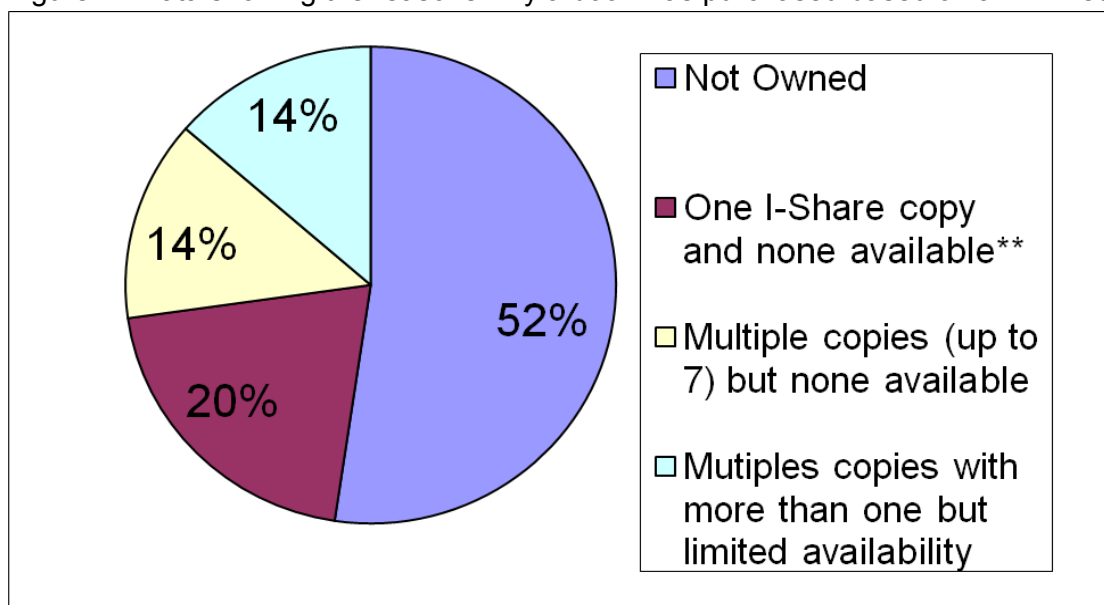
Circulation policies vary among CARLI libraries and can cause confusion for users. This study confirmed the need for a clear, consortia-wide policy for displaying circulation availability that matched reality. This may also be an issue with our Voyager catalog request promotion feature. Some promoted requests were never filled despite the clear evidence of an available copy. Local issues (such as a copy put on reference or held from circulation as a new book) may be affecting the promotion system, and a careful look at this problem will facilitate future PDA programs.

Figure 1. Data showing the reasons why books requested through the PDA book program were not purchased.



Despite the large number of “not purchased” requests, the study did purchase 190 books on demand and delivered them to requestors within three business days on average. Figure 2 shows the reasons why a book was purchased, the most frequent reason being that it was simply not owned within the consortia (52%). Another reason for purchase was the lack of an available copy. The other reasons for purchase shown in Figure 2 all revolve around the number of copies actually available to users. This study confirms what we have long suspected, that often even a consortia cannot own enough copies of a heavily-used title to satisfy all users. However, often just one additional copy, delivered quickly, can make a big difference.

Figure 2. Data showing the reasons why a book was purchased based on a PDA request.



Any number of additional analyses can be made with the data, but most important to this presentation is that the pilot was a success, expending the allocated funds efficiently, delivering materials quickly, and providing users with another way to obtain needed materials. The cooperation of our vendor, YBP, was essential to the success of the program and additional support provided by CARLI was also crucial to the project. In following up six months after the end of the pilot, the 190 books selected by our users continue to generate circulation, confirming that users can effectively select library materials that are suited to other users as well.

## Study 2

Based again on the goal to get needed materials quickly into the hands of users, a second PDA pilot program was created, this one focusing on ebooks. With a one-time funding grant of \$28,000, UIUC initiated a local PDA ebook program in cooperation with our monograph vendor YBP and ebrary. The pilot ran from April to July 2010, when funds were fully expended. Six thousand records were loaded into our local Voyager catalog for ebrary books that fell within our parameters. Parameters set for the pilot were:

- English language titles;
- Price cap of \$200.00 per title;
- 2007 to current copyright dates;
- A few major publishers were removed from the database since UIUC already owns major ebook collections from Springer, Wiley, Blackwell, Elsevier, Greenwood and Safari;
- Reference materials were removed;
- Limit by LC classification, removing nursing, clinical medicine and law;
- Limit to YBP categories of General Academic, Advanced Academic and Professional.

Ebrary's ebook database of over 52,000 items was made available to us for review. Based on our parameters, the 52,000 items were winnowed to approximately 6,000 titles. For this study, the purchase of an ebook was "triggered" when it received over 10 interactions or views. A view was defined as "unique pages viewed + copies + prints." The "unique pages" definition is used to avoid patrons hitting the first page or cover page of a book over and over without entering or using the book. These "unique pages" could be from the table of contents, the abstract, or pages from the text.

The 6,000 ebook-record database was viewed by users 677 times, or about 11% of available titles were found and viewed. Of those 677, 238 garnered enough views to trigger a purchase. The 238 titles had an average cost of \$106.39; funds were expended in approximately four months. At the end of the study, the 6,000 item database was removed from the catalog, leaving the 238 titles purchased. These titles continue to garner use.

Figure 3 shows, by broad subject area, the number of titles that were purchased in humanities, social sciences and sciences. It is not surprising that the sciences represented the smallest group of triggered-for-purchase ebooks. UIUC already owns numerous large collections of

ebooks, many in the science fields, and most of the major science publishers were removed from the database to avoid a duplicate purchase. However, what is surprising is the cost range. Figure 4 shows the cost of ebooks by broad subject and the average cost-per-ebook for each subject. There is only a small (about \$25.00) difference between the humanities (averaging \$91.06 per ebook) and the sciences (averaging \$118.82 per ebook). The print book price spread for these disciplines would be much wider. This may be due to the price cap placed on all ebook purchases during the study (holding science titles under \$200.00) or the fact that ebooks in all fields are more highly priced than their print counterparts.

Figure 3. Ebooks purchased in the pilot study by broad subject.

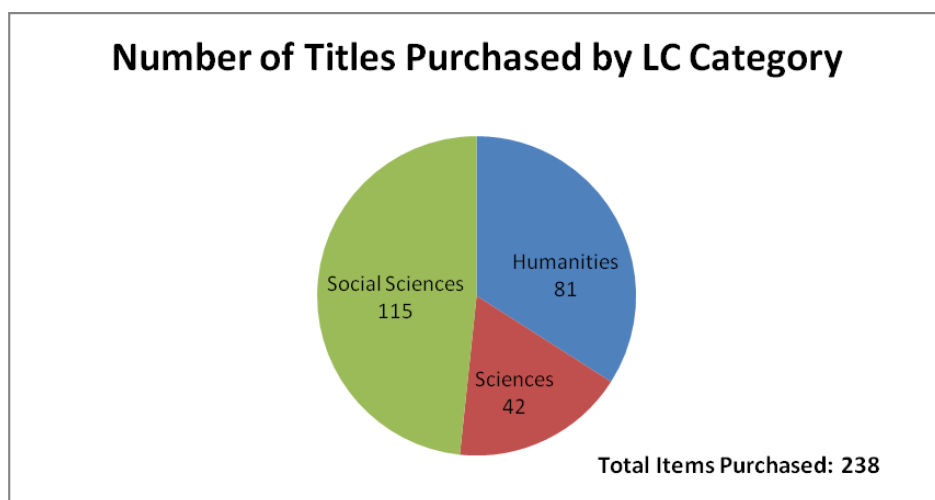


Figure 4. Cost of ebooks by broad subject and average price per ebook by subject.

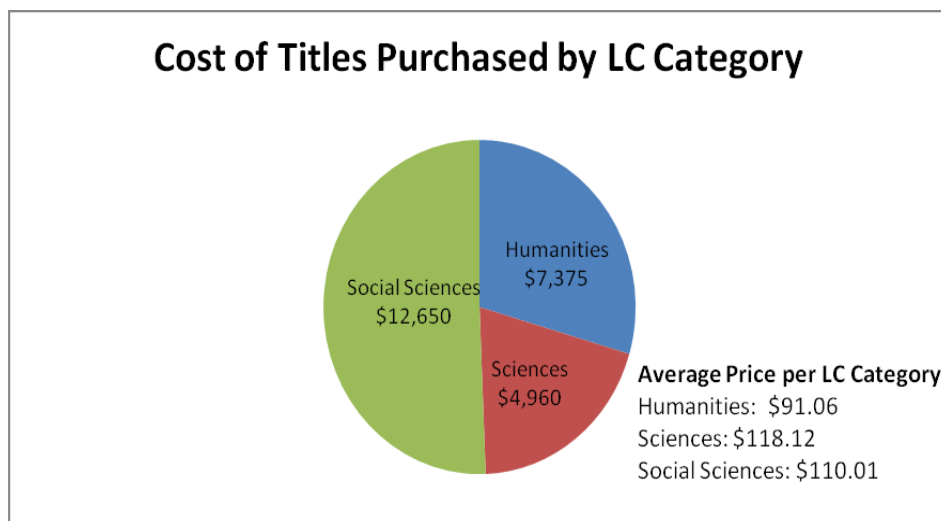
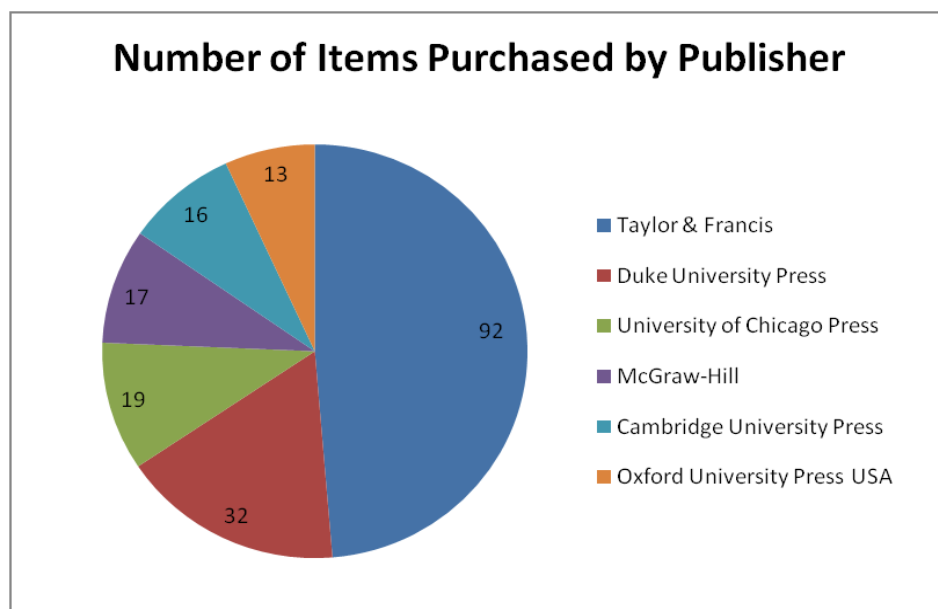


Figure 5 shows the top six publishers and the number of ebooks purchased from those top six publishers during the study period. These top publishers are now candidates for broader ebook purchases since our users found their books the most useful during the pilot.

Figure 5. Number of ebooks purchased by publisher during the study period.



The PDA ebook pilot study, like the print PDA study with CARLI, was successful. It helped the library to measure demand for ebook content and establish a baseline cost per ebook.

### TIPS FOR BUILDING PDA PROGRAMS THAT WORK

The two studies provided a myriad of data on PDA acceptance among users, logistics for staff and feasibility of making the pilot programs permanent.

- Set your program parameters and work closely with the vendor to make sure you have built a program that fits your needs. Check the list of books your patrons are selecting at least every month. This review will bring up any red flags before the program goes farther.
- By establishing firm parameters, users are free to “play” within the limits you set, resulting in books or ebooks that will fit your collection AND satisfy user demand.
- Costs can vary widely. Try pilot programs to begin to learn what your users’ thresholds are for spending.
- Pilot programs can also help iron out technical challenges and better transition staff to new processes.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Patrons do select appropriate materials when given a limited range of options (within a call number range or within a set vendor or publisher subject frame).
- PDA for print books should be conducted within consortia in order to maximize sharing and broaden the scope of purchased materials.
- Publishers continue to be a major stumbling block.

---

The authors wish to thank the entire UIUC Library Acquisitions Staff in Room 12 for their excellent work in pioneering new workflows and testing new models for acquisitions. We would also like to thank Jenny Maddox, Graduate Assistant in Acquisitions, for the detailed records she provided for each of the CARLI PDA requests and Meg Griffin, Graduate Assistant in the Chemistry Library, for her data analysis and chart creations. We also sincerely appreciate the support of our partner in study 1, the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI).